



# Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

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WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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## **Proposals due May 15 in Olympia**

### **WSDA seeks proposals to promote agricultural markets, reduce trade barriers**

**OLYMPIA** – Nearly \$250,000 is available to promote Washington agriculture by finding innovative ways to market the state's agricultural commodities or reduce trade barriers.

Eligible candidates for the grant funds include commodity commissions, public entities, associations, or nonprofit organizations. The recommended range for grant requests is up to \$15,000 per proposal. To be considered, applicants must be able to provide a combination of matching funds and in-kind contributions. Contracts will be issued in July and work must be completed June 30, 2007.

"These grants help our larger agriculture-related businesses keep competitive in the global market," said Janet Leister, manager of WSDA's Marketing Program. "They also present great opportunities for smaller organizations—some for the first time—to promote Washington's diverse food products to local communities or to benefit a number of companies in their industry sector."

Grant applications are due May 15. For questions contact Leister at (360) 902-1931 or e-mail [jleister@agr.wa.gov](mailto:jleister@agr.wa.gov). Application packets are available on the WSDA Web site at [www.agr.wa.gov/marketing/](http://www.agr.wa.gov/marketing/) or by contacting Leisa Schumaker at (360) 902-1926 or [lschumaker@agr.wa.gov](mailto:lschumaker@agr.wa.gov).

Seventeen organizations shared more than \$225,000 in a first round of grants awarded in January 2006 for projects that promoted Washington products domestically and internationally or helped to reduce trade barriers in overseas markets. Funding for both rounds of grants was provided in 2005 by the Washington state Legislature.

"Half of the funds already awarded are being used to promote small farms and domestic marketing," Leister said. "Over a third of the funds are being used to promote Washington's agricultural products to international customers, and 20 percent involve projects that address trade barriers to help open markets."

The current contracts promote everything from apples to asparagus to beef to shellfish. A list is available at <http://agr.wa.gov/Marketing/Grants.htm>.

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